



**Testimony
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Before the
Environment Committee
February 13, 2015**

SB-865 - AN ACT CONCERNING ALLOWABLE COSTS FOR THE INSTALLATION OF OVERSIZED WATER MAINS AND THE BACKUP WELL SITING REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN WATER COMPANY DIVERSIONS.

The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) *supports* the provisions in **SB-865** which would assist towns in addressing the concerns of residents whose private or public drinking water supply well has become contaminated.

SB-865 is aimed at adjusting the formula that the state Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP) uses in administering funding under Section 22a-471 of the general statutes. The funding is for situations “where groundwater pollution has rendered existing supplies unusable for potable drinking water”.

DEEP’s regulations maintain that “those costs which are not necessary to the construction of the potable water supply facilities are unallowable” for state funding assistance under this program. The problem is, under these parameters, if a town decides to install a larger sized water main than what is needed to address the contaminated areas only, they receive *less* funding.

This policy is short-sighted and undermines the ability of towns to address other water supply needs, such as fire protection. For example, if a town decided to install a 12” water main extension to provide additional capacity for fire protection beyond the capacity of the 8” main needed to address the contamination, the additional cost for the 12” main would not be eligible for state funding under the program. But what is more problematic is that under the formula, which is set forth in regulation, use of a larger sized pipe results in a significant *reduction* in funding.

SB-865 is intended to eliminate the penalty in the funding formula so that towns do not receive less funding when they decide that a larger sized water main makes sense to address the community’s public water supply needs.

Clearly, the funding formula is inefficient and undermines the ability of towns to appropriately and sensibly address their water supply needs.

COST urges your support for SB-865.

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